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SUBJECT: ITALY: G-8 HEALTH INITIATIVES DEMARCHE RESPONSE

REF: SECSTATE 66363

(SBU) Econoff delivered reftel points to Basilio Toth, Director of G-8 Assistance for Italy on June, 21. Toth made no substantive comment. Econoff also passed the points to Director of Assistance for Sub-Saharan Africa, Fabrizio Nava.

In an earlier conversation, Nava said that Mozambique and Ethiopia are priority countries for Italy's Africa assistance and the GOI has put an emphasis on training health-care workers in those two countries. Nava said that he expected Sub-Saharan African countries to continue to be a priority for Italian assistance, especially in light of Italy's 2009 G-8 presidency. In 2008, Italy also made combating pandemic diseases a priority, including a 9 million Euro contribution to the WHO. Comment: After the recent election, Italy's assistance priorities are still being formulated and officials are reluctant to specify any new commitments. End comment.
SPOGLI